

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of making a microarray comprising the steps of:
 - providing a support;
 - coating on at least one surface of the support a fluid composition containing microspheres and gelatin;
 - immobilizing the microspheres in the gelatin coating;
 - partially digesting the gelatin with an enzyme to expose surfaces of the microspheres; and
 - removing the enzyme and digested gelatin from the coating, such that a first portion of the microspheres is submerged in the gelatin coating on the support and a second portion is exposed above the gelatin coating and is substantially free of gelatin.
2. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the composition is coated on the support using machine coating.
3. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the immobilization of the microspheres is preserved upon gelation of the gelatin.
4. (original) A method according to claim 3 wherein the coating composition undergoes rapid gelation by chill setting immediately after coating.
5. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the enzyme is esperase, alcalase, savinase, or papain.
6. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein enzyme digestion is terminated by immersing the support with the gelatin coating into a solution that contains no enzyme.

7. (original) A method according to claim 6 wherein the solution that contains no enzyme is an aqueous solution.

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~8~~1 wherein the exposed surfaces of the microspheres bear nucleic acid probes.

11. (original) A method according to claim 10 wherein the nucleic acid probes on the surfaces of the microspheres are oligonucleotides, DNA, DNA fragments, PNAs, or synthetic molecules capable of interacting specifically with a nucleic acid sequence.

12. (original) A microarray comprising: a support having at least one surface containing microspheres immobilized in a gelatin coating; wherein a first portion of the microspheres is submerged in the gelatin coating and a second portion is exposed above the gelatin coating and is substantially free of gelatin.

13. (original) A microarray according to claim 12 wherein the immobilization of the microspheres on the gelatin coating is preserved upon gelation of the gelling agent.

14. (original) A microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres bear chemically active sites.

15. (original) A microarray according to claim 14 wherein the chemically active sites comprise nucleic acid.

16. (original) A microarray according to claim 12 wherein the support comprises glass, plastic, cellulose acetate, or polyethyleneterephthalate.

17. (original) A microarray according to claim 12 wherein the support is flexible.

18. (currently amended) A method of making a microarray comprising the steps of:

--providing a support;

--coating on at least one surface of the support a fluid composition containing microspheres and gelatin; and

--immobilizing the microspheres on the support by allowing gelation of the gelatin such that a first portion of the microspheres is submerged in the gelatin and a second portion is exposed above the gelatin and is substantially free of gelatin; wherein the support has no predetermined sites to attract the microspheres.

19. (original) A method according to claim 18 wherein the composition is coated on the support using knife coating, blade coating or slot coating.

20. (original) A method according to claim 1 or 18 wherein the composition is fluid during coating and the microspheres become randomly immobilized on the support in the plane of coating upon gelation of the gelatin.